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Sports Gambling and Your Job



Sports betting is popular and often peaks in the spring, with a flurry of wagers centered on the March Madness National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) basketball tournaments. It's important Washington State employees understand that ethics laws prohibit gambling in state facilities. This includes using state resources to conduct gambling activity, so avoid all betting activity while on the job. In addition to on-the-job ethical concerns, some experts believe sports betting has added to the risk of compulsive gambling, and many consider it has been an entry point for young people into a lifelong gambling addiction.

Source: http://www.ethics.wa.gov/ADVISORIES/opinions/02-05.htm?zoom_highlight=gambling

Weight Management and Children

Findings from a recent national study suggest that pre-school-aged children have a 40 percent lower risk of obesity if they regularly engage in one or more of three specific household routines: eat dinner as a family five or more days per week; get adequate sleep (10.5 hours average); and limit weekday television viewing to two hours or less. The study is significant because it involved more than 8,000 children and the results held true for every socioeconomic and ethnic group studied—even for families in which there was a higher risk of obesity.



Source: Ohio State, Research Communications, February 8, 2010.

Food Portion Distortion



Increase your awareness of “food portion distortion.” Over the past several decades, the size of food portions has exploded. What was a tiny bag of French fries is now a box; a small drink is now a large; and a large drink is now a bucket! Even triple-patty hamburgers are now available. The ill effects on health have always existed, but, in addition, what we think of as a “portion” has increased! To avoid the potential impact on your health, consider interventions such as using smaller plates, sharing food, ordering only the appetizer if the entrée is huge, or simply asking for less.

Source: NIH National Heart, Lung, and Blood Institute. www.nhlbi.nih.gov.

Do Positive Affirmations Really Work?

Goal achievement experts have found the technique of repeating an affirming, positive message daily to improve your life can work wonders. But the best way to increase your chances of success when using positive affirmations is to *be specific*. Rather than repeating a generalized statement of self-improvement such as “I am becoming a healthier person every day,” rework your affirmation to be precise, targeting the goal you want to achieve. For example, “I am focused on walking 30-45 minutes every day, and I will participate in the charity walk scheduled in May.”



When Trauma Affects a Loved One Who Is ... Far Away



Distance compounds worry and fear. When a loved one is in harm's way, stress overload can occur due to:

- incomplete information
- an inability to communicate
- feelings of helplessness
- a repeating media "loop" of bad news.

If you are in such a situation, these suggestions may help: (1) Communicate with your manager or HR if you need workplace accommodations to help you cope. (2) Turn off the television as an information source, and use official Web sites/information sources that disseminate important details. (3) Maintain routines and stick to a schedule. Familiarity and normalcy in everyday life provide a natural antidote to emotional upheaval. (4) Focus on wellness. Eat healthy foods, get plenty of rest and keep up your exercise routine. (5) Focus on things that you can control, like cleaning and organizing your surroundings. To satisfy the need to "do something," join forces with others organizing fund-raising events or working together to assemble care packages. (6) Write or e-mail your loved one even if he or she can't receive the message yet. Getting thoughts on paper is a helpful emotional release. (7) Don't keep children in the dark. Provide appropriate information. Let younger ones express their feelings through art projects, writing and play. (8) Talk about what you're feeling with someone you trust. Your employee assistance program can be a resource for support, advice and helpful referrals.

Fighting Time Bandits

Spot time bandits, those numerous annoying distractions that seem endlessly to interrupt productivity. Make intervention of time bandits and effective time management your goal, and you will reap good rewards. Many time bandits lurk within your habits and may be as close as your "to-do" list. A "to do" list—the oldest and often least understood productivity tool—should be more than a memory jogger. Rather than recording everything you possibly need to do, make a list of only two or three things that absolutely must get done *today*. Doing so will cause you to work on what counts rather than spending valuable time on those less important time bandits. Best-selling author and business success expert Michael Gerber coaches even his high-powered CEO clients in how to use this technique to get more done.



College Spring Break Dangers



Spring break trips to Florida, Texas, and Mexico are coming up. Young people, and especially women, should take measures to avoid "drug-facilitated sexual assault" while on spring break jaunts. Notorious drugs used for such crimes include Ketamine, Rohypnol, and GHB. Important rules of prevention include: (1) Don't drink alcoholic beverages if you are underage. (2) If you do drink, don't drink beverages that you did not open. Avoid drinking from a punch bowl, and don't drink from a container that is being passed around. (3) If someone offers you a drink from the bar, decline, and order your own drink. (4) Carry your own drink at all times. (5) Don't leave your drink unattended. (6) If you accidentally leave your drink unattended, discard it. Victim prevention information can be found at www.JustThinkTwice.com, a site recommended by the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration for increasing education and awareness about drugs.

Calling in "Sick"

Have you phoned in "sick" just to get a day off?



One national survey found that 20% of employees have done so at least once. The most common reason: "I felt stressed and needed a day off." The next time the desire to take a day off looms, consider phoning your EAP. Feeling like you *need* a day off might be a signal that a personal difficulty or workplace issue needs to be resolved. For example, is there conflict with a coworker or supervisor? Or, do you need better organizational skills to cope with a demanding workload? Perhaps you've had a disagreement or you're dealing with an unfair workplace experience? Instead of taking a day off for short-term relief, talk to the EAP where you might discover a long-term cure.